

Remarks

1. Summary of the Office Action

In the March 9, 2006 Office Action (“OA”), the Examiner rejected claims 2, 8-10, 13-15, 17, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,657,373 (“Hermansson”); rejected claims 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Hermansson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,943,620 (“Boltz”); and rejected claims 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Hermansson in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,393,275 (“Alfred”). Additionally, the Examiner objected to claim 17 as having an element with insufficient antecedent basis. Finally, the Examiner appears to have withdrawn all prior rejections – finding them “moot.”

2. Status of the Claims

Presently pending in this application are claims 2-5, 7-18, and 20, of which claims 2, 17, and 18 are independent and the remainder are dependent. Independent claims 2 and 17 have been amended to more particularly point-out the claimed subject matter and to correct a minor typographical error involving proper antecedent basis.

The invention as recited in various ways in each of the pending claims provides methods for facilitating operation of multiple subscriber stations under a common subscriber ID. Each station is configured to originate calls through the common subscriber ID. However, when a termination signal containing the common subscriber ID is transmitted, all but one of the subscriber stations will ignore the signal.

According to the now pending claims, a broadcast termination signal includes the common subscriber ID to identify the intended destination of the signal and each subscriber station associated with the subscriber ID is individually configured to either

respond or ignore the broadcast termination signal. Even though each of the multiple subscriber stations is associated with the common subscriber ID and the termination signal includes the common subscriber ID to identify the intended destination, only one station is arranged to respond to the termination signal.

Dependent claim 13 further recites that the common subscriber ID is a mobile identification number (MIN).

Independent claim 17 indicates that an origination from one of the subscriber stations carries a unique combination of a subscriber account number (which is a particular type of subscriber ID) and a serial number (such as an ESN) to thereby distinguish the originating subscriber terminal.

3. Hermansson Fails to Teach or Suggest Using a Common Subscriber ID as a Destination Identifier in a Multiple Subscriber Station Scenario

The Examiner rejected independent claims 2 and 17 as anticipated by Hermansson. Hermansson discloses a system where a subscriber is assigned a telephone number and multiple SIM cards. A subscriber register (HLR) maintains a recording system to ensure that only one of the SIM cards is activated for incoming calls, but may allow all of the SIM cards to be activated for outgoing calls. Hermansson discloses that each SIM card is assigned a unique ID number (IMSI), and that the HLR maintains a record of which IMSI's are associated with the subscriber's account. In communication with the network, cards are identified by their "unique identity numbers IMSI."

In Hermansson, it appears that a termination signal intended for the subscriber is keyed to a particular SIM card's IMSI at the network level, and thus, an incoming call is directed to the particular SIM by including the IMSI information in a termination signal.

To be clear, Hermansson does appear to discuss a common subscriber number. However, Hermansson only discloses using that common subscriber number in the HLR database, and does not disclose using the common subscriber number in a termination signal or that the multiple subscriber stations themselves include an association with the common subscriber number.

In the present invention, however, the claims recite that the common subscriber ID (or subscriber account number) is included in the termination signal to designate the signal destination. Thus, an incoming call uses the common subscriber ID to identify the intended destination of the termination signal. Then, at the level of the subscriber stations, the first subscriber station is configured to respond to the termination signal that includes the common subscriber ID, while the other subscriber stations are configured to ignore that type of incoming signal.

Because Hermansson does not disclose use of the common subscriber ID in the termination signal to identify the intended destination, it cannot serve to anticipate the invention as claimed in independent claims 2 and 17 or any of their dependents.¹

Furthermore, because Hermansson does not even suggest that a common subscriber ID should serve as a destination identifier in the termination signal, Applicants respectfully traverse the obviousness rejection of independent claim 18 as well.²

¹ Claims 13 and 20 further define the common subscriber ID and termination signal as a MIN or as MIN-based respectively. Hermansson provides no disclosure for including a MIN as a destination identifier for a termination signal.

² As discussed in a prior response, the cited Boltz reference likewise teaches the use of an identifier of the particular subscriber station – the IMSI – that uniquely identifies the intended destination station of a call. Boltz does not teach or suggest the use of a common subscriber ID to serve as a destination identifier in the termination signal.

4. Hermansson Fails to Disclose an Origination Signal Carrying a Unique Combination of Subscriber Account Number and a Serial Number

Claim 17 recites that an origination from one of the subscriber stations is configured to carry a unique combination of a subscriber account number (which is a particular type of subscriber ID) and a serial number (such as an ESN or IMSI) to thereby distinguish the originating subscriber terminal. In Hermansson, however, it appears that the serial number (IMSI) alone is used to distinguish the originating subscriber terminal. Hermansson, Col. 4, lines 18-22.

Because Hermansson does not disclose the unique combination of subscriber account number and serial number, that reference cannot serve to anticipate independent claim 17.

5. Conclusion

Based on these amendments and arguments, Applicants respectfully asserts that the claims are now in allowable form and requests speedy allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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